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PICTURESQUE BUFFALO.

By William Horace Hotchkiss.

FEW cities impress the æsthetic sense less at first glance than Buffalo. The stranger who hastens next year through the Empire State to Chicago, will be awakened by the clatter from spreading freight yards some miles before he reaches Lake Erie, will rattle over a score of rail-

quarters of all American railroads, will stretch his legs in a noisy station, board his train again, spin out over, under, through, and along numberless tracks, all crossing streets at grade, pass more wildernesses of workingmen's houses, and thank heaven for his escape. He may ask



LAFAYETTE SQUARE, THE SOLDIERS' MONUMENT, AND THE BUFFALO LIBRARY.

road crossings, rush by train after train, through and across dirty streets lined by countless mechanics' dwellings, skirting a lofty manufactory or two, down this way and up that, finally backing into the station, and, after wondering whether this is the national stock yard, or the head-

the Buffalonian, who has boarded the train, if they have anything but railroads in Buffalo, and will gaze amazed when the native proudly replies: "Bless your innocent soul, we have six hundred and sixty miles of railroad tracks inside the city limits, more than any other city in the

whole world; and we are proud of it, too."

Perhaps the stranger will visit Buffalo again on his way homeward through Niagara Falls. Alas for the Queen City! This railroad goes clattering across and under others, skirting factories, malt houses, and machine shops, with a view of Lake Erie on one side and of a penitentiary on the other, along the edge of the docks and coal dumps, by the jail and police headquarters, down through the old Buffalo of fifty years

other "Burning of Buffalo," he bowls further into the town, rolls about in the newer quarters, and, drinking in the cooling breeze from the lake, goes noiselessly over mile after mile of asphalt, through whole districts of handsome houses, into the Park, along the broad parkways, with a glimpse from the Front of the sunset behind the low hills of the Dominion, and in the evening listens to the story of Buffalo's growth, wealth, and happiness, he will soon forget the distant rumble of the circling rail-



DELAWARE AVENUE AND THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

ago and into the same station again. Don't fancy that he will stop, unless to inspect this "dirty railroad town" with an eye to business. For Buffalo has been both blessed and cursed by its railroads. It is impossible to leave the city, save by water, without crossing from three to ten series of tracks. Buffalo is encircled by networks of steel. This is the first and only impression of the stranger who passes through.

But suppose he makes a stop. The impression at first is little improved. The chief business thoroughfare, called Main Street, is as plain as its name, its store buildings out of date two decades ago, its pavement, save for patches of asphalt, uneven, worn, and rutty. But if, with an Amen to the natives' frequent prayer for an-

roads. Buffalo, in addition to its commercial importance, is actually one of the most attractive of American cities.

There is no lack of history and romance in connection with the present city. The origin of its name caused a fierce and learned controversy not many decades ago. Certain local savants doubted whether the American bison ever roamed so far eastward, and scouted the theory that the town took its name from these hardy ruminants. A descendant of the Senecas bore witness to a tradition among the Indians that the name arose from a joke perpetrated by their ancestors. It seems that, about the end of the last century, some guileless sportsmen from Manhattan came to the wilderness near



ELEVATORS ON BUFFALO HARBOR.

Buffalo Creek, hunting the bison, but in vain. The buffaloes did not materialize. However, their mouths were made up for a feast on buffalo meat, and they employed a native, as their descendants do nowadays, to bag them the game.

Their skill was rewarded; the native in due season returned with some fine buffalo steaks, and the hunters declared they had never tasted better. The tradition, however, goes on to relate that the native hunter had found an old horse in the forests, so that, as the historian puts it, the gentlemen from New York feasted on a Buffalo colt, instead of a buffalo calf. Hence the name—a solution which would do had not the name "Buffaloe" been used in authentic records prior to the date of this alleged buffalo hunt.

The early annals of the town are lost in Indian traditions. Local writers are fond of the legend of the extermination of the Kah-Kwahs by the Eries on this spot. Portions of the Six Nations undoubtedly settled along the shore of Lake Erie during

and after the Revolutionary war. Here authentic history begins. The first white settlers were in reality captives carried away by the Indians in the retreat westward in 1779; while the first white man to own property was a son of Sir William Johnson and his Indian wife.

The whole region has become famous in the annals of the aborigines as the home of Red Jacket, the orator of the Senecas. But the domination of the Indians was short. The Holland Land Company came with a train of settlers. Even Red Jacket was civilized by fire water; and the owners of the site whereon now stands the great city have been long since thrust aside into reservations.

Buffalo has had many "booms." Its first boomer was Joseph Ellicott, well called the Romulus of Buffalo, who in 1804, as the surveyor and agent of the Holland Land Company, looked far into the future. With a remark that though he as a surveyor and agent "must try to make Batavia, God had made Buffalo,"

Ellicott planned a town that was the nucleus of the present city. This town he called New Amsterdam, and dubbed its streets with such names as Schimmelpennick, Van Staphorst, and Vollenhoven Avenues, in recognition of the members of the Holland Land Company—a nomenclature that was metamorphosed into Niagara,



CHURCH OF CHRIST (DISCIPLES).

Main, and Erie Streets before the town was two decades old.

Buffalo and its neighborhood suffered severely in the war of 1812. The American army was quartered near at hand, and, before peace was declared, the town was reduced to ashes and its inhabitants scattered into the forests. The present city includes Black Rock, then a rival village. Fierce was the contest waged between the two in 1825 for the terminus of the Erie Canal. Local historians tell incidents of this rivalry which read like the county seat wars of our young West.

Each town needed a harbor. Black Rock had the swift current of the Niagara to contend with; Buffalo a troublesome bar at the mouth of the creek. So the citizens of the former built a pier to cope with the current, while those of the latter waded into the water and dug out a channel. The pier gave way before the resistless rush of waters, but the channel remained. Buffalo won, absorbed Black Rock some decades later, and

now stretches miles beyond. The opening of the canal made the new city a lake port of importance.

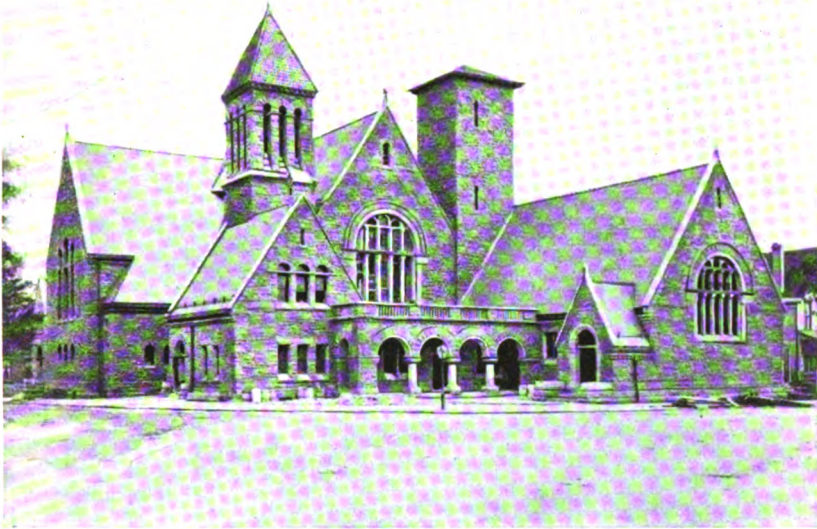
The canal was indirectly responsible for Buffalo's second "boom." With the coming of settlers and the opening of the commerce of the great lakes, the little town quickly grew to a city, and was incorporated in 1832

with about ten thousand inhabitants. Then every one went mad. An era of land speculation began, which lasted nearly four years, and is almost without a parallel in the history of the country. Real estate values were enormously inflated, sales were on small payments with the balance in mortgages, until, as our historian remarks, a wit of the town said that even the physicians prescribed that their medicines be taken one fourth down, and the rest in annual installments.

The crash came in 1837, the chief boomer went to prison, and Buffalo from a city of millionaires descended in a day to a city of paupers. The lesson was learned once. This blow, however, seems to have been of temporary effect. The lake trade increased, railroads came, and, when the latter superseded the canal, the town prospered faster than ever. It had 30,000 people in 1846, 42,000 in 1850, and 74,000 in 1855.

This rapid growth led to another crash, contemporaneous with the panic of 1857. Real estate was again a drug on the market. The lesson was learned over again. But even this did not stay the growth of the town. It boasted 81,000 people in 1860, 117,000 in 1870, and 155,000 in 1880.

From this time dates the newer Buffalo of today. Between 1880 and 1890 it increased more than 100,000 in population, and according to the recent state census now has 280,000 people within its limits. Thanks to the railroads, the little lake port of



THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.
From a photograph by A. Wittemann, New York.

1840 has become the largest grain forwarding and coal distributing city in the world, has thousands of manufactories, is the terminus for twenty five railroads, has a fleet second only to that of Cleveland, and, with its suburb Tonawanda, is the greatest lumber market on the globe.

The city of Buffalo occupies level ground at the point where Lake Erie pours into Niagara River, and stretches about nine miles from north to south, with an average breadth of four miles, possessing thus an exceptionally ample acreage, exceeded only, among American cities, by that of Chicago, Philadelphia, and a few others. In local parlance, it is divided into the east and west sides; Main Street, which runs nearly north and south, being the dividing line.

The east side, with the exception of portions near Main Street, is made up largely of the German and Polish quarters. The Germans have two long business streets of their own, and count among their numbers many of Buffalo's most influential citizens.

The west side is devoted almost exclusively to residences, with manufactories and shipping galore on the lake and river fronts. Buffalo's business quarter centers around the old town as laid out by Ellicott, while scattered about the harbor and the mouth of the Buffalo Creek is a little city of elevators, forty five in number—the largest cluster of them in the world.

It is well known that Ellicott's plan was modeled after that used by his brother in laying out Washington. Many of the streets radiate from central points; there are circles and little parks here and there. Niagara and Erie Streets run each at an acute angle to Main at the point chosen by Ellicott for the center of his town, the latter coming to an end in Lake Erie, the former running off for miles along the lake and river, and forming the principal artery of the Black Rock district.

Where Niagara Street crosses Delaware Avenue, Genesee Street comes in and completes the spokes of the wheel, stretching to the lake in one direction, and four miles or

more through the German quarter in the other. A mile north of this central point, and running east and west, is North Street, and from it northward run the new streets of the finest residence quarter in the city. Seneca Street, stretching eastward from

archway of elms and maples, its footways passing scores of handsome residences. However, the most imposing street in Buffalo is Richmond Avenue. It was designed to be the most fashionable. It is a part of the park system, with at one end the ex-



DELAWARE AVENUE, AFTER A SHOWER.

Drawn by L. M. Glackens, from a photograph by Willis O. Chapin which won the prize in a recent amateur contest.

lower Main Street, and Broadway, nearly paralleling Genesee, through the German quarter, are also important arteries.

The stranger cannot be long in Buffalo without exclaiming in admiration of its prodigality of smooth pavement. The native boasts of one hundred miles of asphalt within the city limits, and the work has been in the main so well done that he may be forgiven the wretched condition of his one hundred and forty miles of stone pavements. Buffalo's most famous street is Delaware Avenue. At its junction with Niagara stands the Gothic residence of Millard Fillmore, and for miles this magnificent avenue runs as straight as an arrow to the park, its asphalt shaded by an

quisite towers of the New York State Hospital rising in the distance, at the other the handsome pile of the new First Presbyterian Church cresting a little rise of ground at the Circle.

Between Richmond and Delaware Avenues, and north of North Street, is the product of Buffalo's latest boom, a district of houses lining streets of asphalt, where were meadows two years ago, the "Region of the Shingle Stain,"—the pride of Buffalo. No less worthy of mention is Fillmore Avenue, which is a continuation of the park system and a broad thoroughfare, paved with asphalt, the Delaware Avenue of the east side. Out beyond the thickly settled quarters are fledgling streets,



THE CITY AND COUNTY HALL.

paved magnificently, and with lofty trees standing like sentinels before houseless lots—the homespots of Buffalo's future millionaires.

There is room for a million people within the present limits of the city. Electric lines are rapidly developing outlying districts. The universal use of natural gas for fuel makes sunshine and fresh paint possible. Add to this a climate where the thermometer rarely reaches 90 degrees, whose winters are tempered by the neighboring lakes, and you have a picture of the fair city of which the Buffalonian is so proud.

Notwithstanding the architectural plainness of its business streets, the Queen City does not lack imposing

buildings. The majority of these are of recent construction. Indeed the business part of the town seems just now in a transition state, though nothing short of a general conflagration will smoke out the dormant burghers who collect their rents from many an ancient building on Main Street. The new home of the Erie County Savings Bank, scarce yet completed, will, however, be one of the finest office buildings in the world, and is today the most imposing structure in Buffalo. The new post office building, for which Congress recently appropriated two and a half millions of dollars, though surrounded by poor structures, will when completed vie with the City



ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH.
From a photograph by A. Wittemann, New York.

and County Hall, whose striking tower is the radial center of the city and a landmark for miles around. This latter edifice, now nearly twenty years old, bears the unique distinction of having been built within its appropriation. In it are all of the county offices and some of the city's, and from its mayor's office has gone forth one well known Buffalonian to the Presidential chair.

Where the old court house stood for so many years, just beyond Lafayette Square and the lofty Soldiers' Monument, is another of the institutions of Buffalo. In its distributing room is a visitors' book, and few who visit it have gone without adding testimony therein to the excellence of the Buffalo Library. Besides the 66,000 and more volumes

and its well stocked reading and reference rooms, the building is an ornament to the town. It is also the home of the Historical Society, the Law School, and, with its museum, art treasures, art school, and lecture rooms, is the center of intellectual Buffalo—a portion of the population, by the way, of striking and increasing size. Further up Main Street is the Music Hall, risen from the ashes of the first structure of that name, with a small hall or two in addition to the great auditorium.

Out in the park region rises the irregular pile of the New York State Hospital, one of the most complete institutions of its kind in the land. But before all these in the eyes of the native Buffalonian is the old mansion of General Peter B. Porter on Niagara Street, overlooking the river. It is a pity to discredit the legend that clings

to it and tells how General Porter, while living there during the war of 1812, was surprised one morning by a raid of the British, and how he dashed off to arouse the neighboring village of Buffalo, in—well, hardly in regimentals. The truth is that this building was not erected until 1816. But then how dry would history become without some delightful fictions!

A half mile up Delaware Avenue from Niagara Square is a large building, apparently a residence—the home of the Buffalo Club. In its reception room hang portraits of two Presidents of the United States, its members, while that of DeWitt Clinton, a greater than either, though neither a member nor a President, occupies the opposite wall. Almost

across the street is a newer building, the home of the Saturn Club, among whose members are many of the moving spirits of the younger, progressive Buffalo of today.

There are three other clubs that deserve mention in a sketch of the life of the Queen City—influential political organizations with handsome houses and large membership. The Cleveland Democracy, named after Buffalo's most honored citizen, is a potent force at campaigning times; while the White House, on Main Street, occupied by the Buffalo Republican League, is not only one of the finest residence buildings near the business quarter, but the source of enthusiasm and political pyrotechnics every fall. The Country Club, whose unique house is just beyond the Park, is a popular rendezvous of Buffalo's society. There is also the Liberal Club, recently organized and without a local habitation, which meets monthly at dinner, and whose members speak their minds so freely on the questions of the day that they often give the lie to at least one of its trinity of mottoes: "in thought, free; in temper, reverent; in method, scientific."

But if the intellectual life of Buffalo is inclined to liberality, the city is none the less blessed with churches. In the olden time, indeed not many years ago, the very heart of the town was known as "The Churches." The First Presbyterian Church has now given place to the Erie County Savings Bank building, and moved into a new edifice in the residence quarter. One of the old churches still remains—St. Paul's, with a spire which for taper and beauty rivals many a more pretentious belfry in the Old World. No

historian of Buffalo overlooks St. Paul's; for did not the Baron Hirsch of 1825, Judge Manuel Mordecai Noah, attended by a civic procession, and to the tune of "Old Hundred," lay before the altar of this Gentile sanctuary the foundation



TEMPLE BETH ZION.

stone of his new Israel, the City of Ararat?—though the refuge which he would have founded was on Grand Island, nine miles away!

St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Cathedral is near at hand and famous for its centennial organ; while the spire of the Church of St. Louis on Main Street recalls memories of the open Gothic of Cologne and the pale moonlight fretted through, just before one is off for his journey up the Rhine.

The quondam resident of Germany, even in this German American city, misses the open beer gardens of the happy Fatherland. There is here but one large garden, and it but poorly imitates the originals across the ocean. Yet it has the band seated within the curved sound reflector, and the carpet of tables;

and hither flock the Germans of Buffalo on summer evenings and Sunday afternoons. It is one of the characteristic spots of the Queen City.

But leaving the Parade House—such is the meaningless name of this outing ground—a brief ride up the east parkway takes you to the Park, an irregularly shaped expanse of about four hundred acres. This

in which rest the bones of two hundred soldiers of the war of 1812.

Ten years ago the Park was in the country. Today Buffalo has grown out to it, and is now extending around it. Well may the busy city come here to rest; the Park and its Meadow have not their equal outside of the capitals of the Old World.

The park system ends in the Front, overlooking the lake, where



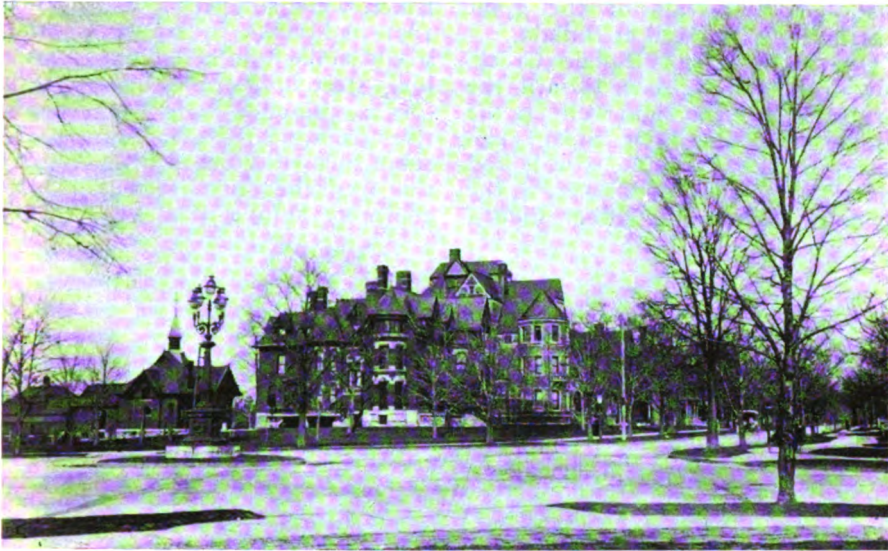
THE ERIE COUNTY SAVINGS BANK.

beautiful pleasure ground lies just to the north of Forest Lawn Cemetery, whose striking shafts and tombs are reflected by the Park Lake. But the propinquity is unnoticed by the Buffalonian on pleasure bent, especially if he is off for a canter across the Meadow. This is a name given to the eastern and larger part of the Park, through whose two hundred acres not a road nor a path runs, the whole expanse of greensward being open to riders and pedestrians. Outside of England there are few scenes of broad meadow land to equal this. Some practical—or poetical—city father has added to the landscape a flock of sheep, roaming over the Meadow in care of its shepherd.

The historian never drives about this beauty spot without pointing out two willow trees, the thriving head and foot boards of a long grave

it pours into the Niagara; and here is or was, yes, is *and* was, Fort Porter. *Is*, because the flag staff yet stands, the sentry passes to and fro, and two companies of regulars lazily watch the slumberous Canadian villages across the river, ready to repel an invasion; *was*, for the moss grown ruin of the Fort itself has disappeared.

The native loved to conjure tales of attack and repulse, of shot, shell, and shrapnel, and affix them to this dismantled redoubt. But the Fort's only battle was with the fire fiend, the result of accident at that. It was then abandoned to romance and the small boy, and was buried in 1887 by the practical officer who presided at the castellated headquarters across the lawn—because it had served its usefulness. And, as you look across the river and catch a glimpse of the flag of old England,



THE CIRCLE, JUNCTION OF NORTH STREET AND RICHMOND AVENUE.

you cannot help musing on what the world would have lost had the Englishman of today been as iconoclastic with his Tower of London, or the German finished the revengeful work of his neighbor across the Rhine on the magnificent ruin at Heidelberg.

The sojourner in Buffalo will be speedily struck with the number of literary clubs scattered through the town. Lecturers and musicians are sure of large audiences. In matters artistic, too, Buffalo is in advance of most of the commercial hives.

The modern Buffalo belle delights to relate a story of her ancestors two generations ago. A little way up Delaware Avenue, standing back from the street, is an old stone mansion which none pass without comment. Here dwelt the first Mayor of Buffalo, Dr. Johnson, in the center of a large estate; and his manorial residence, The Cottage, still stands. The interest of the belles and beaux, however, centers not in the building, but in a certain Miss Johnson, daughter of the doctor-mayor, who, so the story goes, met, loved, and married a certain young lawyer, named Lord. But to accomplish

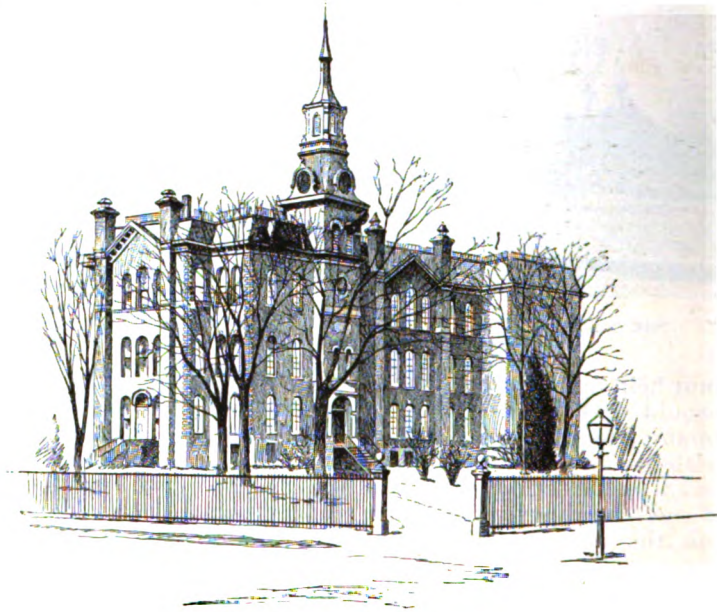
this she eloped, and, with the wit which her successors delight to emulate, left on her table in this same Cottage, this saucy message to papa: "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord!" What papa did is not related, but the young lawyer Lord afterwards entered the ministry and was known to fame as the Rev. Dr. Lord.

An enthusiast once wrote that Buffalo sits "like a commercial Constantinople stretching along the Bosphorus of the broad Niagara, and holding the keys of the Dardanelles that shall open and shut the gates of trade for the regions east and west" — a flight which tempts the new-comer to exclaim "Like Constantinople, indeed! In the filth of its wharves and the dirt of its down town streets." But there is more in the simile. Spend but a half hour with the Buffalo statistician; he will prove to you the strategical position of the Queen of the Lakes. Railroads vie with steamships; manufactures with tonnages of wheat. La Salle's little Le Griffon, which first sailed these waters in 1678, was the pioneer of a fleet that brings the

grain and minerals of the great Northwest to pay toll at Buffalo.

On the shores of Buffalo Creek, now dredged and blasted until the largest vessels can float well up the stream, rose the Dart Steam elevator, the first in the world, and round and about its successor, the Bennett, cluster the other giants,

which were shipped to the city in 1891 had come in single file, they would make a procession 3503 miles long, stretching from Maine to California. Wander along the lake and river front, near the coal dumps, and some one will volunteer the remark that from this port 2,365,892 tons of coal were shipped last year; while



THE NORMAL SCHOOL.

whose capacity is so great that a statistician makes the statement that a fleet bringing to Buffalo twenty million bushels of grain, all arriving in one day, can be unloaded and reloaded with coal and ready for the return voyage within the twenty four hours.

Buffalo is the birthplace of the grape sugar industry. Its enormous railroad interests have been already referred to. If the sojourner finds himself in East Buffalo, he will discover the spot where the Wagner Palace Car is made, and manufactories and machine shops without number. Buffalo is moreover the largest sheep market in the world; next to Chicago, the largest live stock market; and as for hogs, it is said that if the 5,657,800 porkers

up there in the City and County Hall they will say that the assessed valuation of the city increased \$67,000,000, or 83 per cent, in the last decade.

There has been some newspaper talk of late in favor of a collection of buffaloes for the Park; something foreseen, it seems, in 1862 by ex-President Millard Fillmore, who, commenting upon the municipal bear pit at Berne, Switzerland, trusted that "we shall not imitate the Bernese example by keeping two or three wild buffaloes." But if the Buffalonian is thus to do homage to the noble ruminant, why not, suggests a critic from Buffalo's late rival, the city of Cleveland, abolish the old time municipal totem of a ship and a canal boat and substitute



THE MEADOW DRIVE IN THE PARK.

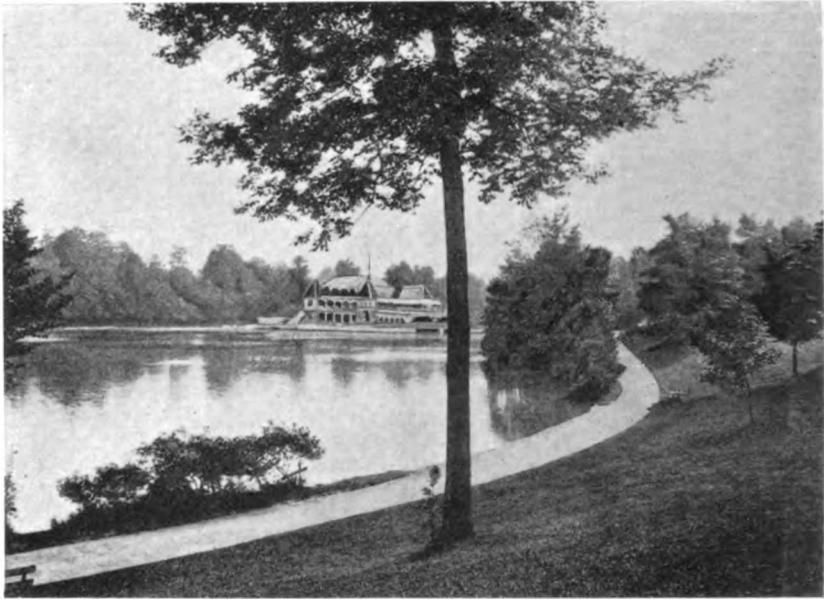
for it a bison's head, in the act of bellowing? Which means that the lakeside Ohioan is jealous of Buffalo's growth and future. For Buffalo is of a truth a-boom.

An enterprising dealer in real estate advertised his wares the other day by representing them in the down pan of the scales, while in the other were exploding bubbles, labeled "Which Paw, Kans.," "Spookton Falls Imp. Co.," "Whenver, Col.," "Take-a-Home-a, Wash.," and the like. So far as we can judge, this illustrates the character of Buffalo's boom. It is ten years old and more, has been steadily growing, and since the promise of cheap power from the great cataract at Niagara, has increased to such dimensions as to surpass anything of a similar character, save the development of Chicago a decade ago. In 1887, the *New York Times* predicted that Buffalo "would inevitably become the greatest milling city on the earth." The *New York Tribune* said editorially not many months ago that the Queen City was destined to gain steadily on Chicago in the race for commercial supremacy, and predicted a population of 1,000,000 at the next federal census; while the latter

city's *Tribune* gracefully accepts the prophesy that its rival will be the electrical center of the world.

All this, added to the very substantial character of its present commerce and trade, has set the Buffaloes bellowing in good earnest. Suburban property has increased enormously in value; a recent movement of the locomotive construction department of one of the railroad systems to some farm lands several miles east of the limits, has started a town there; and the prospect of electrical power has increased the value of lands between the city and Niagara Falls tenfold.

Apropos of booms, the oldest resident tells a good story; and he tells it with gusto these days, as an antidote to what he calls the reckless enthusiasm of New Buffalo. A certain Mr. Barton, in 1835, owned two lots in Black Rock, for which he had paid two hundred and fifty dollars. When prices began to rise, he put his figures at \$3,000. Now, it so happened that he was absent from home a couple of months. Meanwhile prices had gone up; and, on the morning of his return, he was accosted, and asked what was his price: he replied \$6,000.



THE PARK LAKE AND BOATHOUSE.
From a photograph by A. Wittemann, New York.

A little later he met another boomer, and, to a similar question, replied: "\$20,000, ten per cent down, the balance in four annual payments;" to which the boomer rejoined: "Say six annual payments and I'll take it."

"Done," quoth Mr. Barton, who stepped into a store, received the \$2,000, took a bond and mortgage for the balance, and went home—thus, as he afterwards related, raising his price \$14,000 in going fourteen rods along the street and then selling.

If the listener is not up in Buffalo history, this story will be lost on him. The moral lies in the fact that two years later the boom collapsed, and Mr. Barton foreclosed the \$18,000 mortgage and had to bid in his lots. At least, he bid them in if perchance he was so lucky as to have saved from the universal wreck enough to pay court costs and a lawyer for foreclosure.

Municipal reformers will do well to study the government of the Queen City. This rapidly increasing hive of industry is now testing a

new charter. It has an elective mayor, and chooses by ballot many others of its executive officers; but it touches its people most and most intimately through a Board of Public Works of three members, chosen one by the people, the other two, one from each party, by the mayor. The old time board of aldermen is retained, and restrained, by an "upper house" of nine citizens chosen on a general city ticket. This scheme, thanks possibly to the even distribution of parties as much as to the reform element embodied therein, is apparently a success.

Such is Buffalo, a thriving town, already large, wealthy and prosperous, adding the conservatism of the East to the vim and enterprise of the West, reliant, too, on the future, and expecting some time to be called in real earnest, as its boomer now boasts, the Manchester of America.

For the photographs from which most of the illustrations accompanying this article were made we are indebted to the courtesy of the Buffalo Camera Club, and especially to Miss Mary Hoyt, and Messrs. Willis O. Chapin, A. W. Simons, F. A. Fell, O. H. Hauenstein, A. G. Hauenstein, and H. H. Boyce.